General Assembly Consultative Workshops on:
Workshop 1
**Technology needs of developing countries and options to address them**
30 April

**CLOSING REMARKS**


Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The first Workshop on technology needs of developing countries and options to address them has delivered what was expected. We were provided with a comprehensive panorama of developments - what is happening on the ground in terms of actual technology development and deployment, what difficulties continue to exist in accessing and adapting technologies to local needs, what are some of the challenges we face in scaling up key technologies for sustainable development, and what are some of the options for addressing them.

The focus was clearly on poverty reduction, especially in the morning session where we discussed agricultural technologies and the technology needs of developing countries to provide food security while ensuring sustainable management of land and water. The need to adapt to climate change heightens the challenges facing developing country agriculture.

Our experts presented a broad understanding of technology in the context of sustainable development. A point was made that, for instance in agriculture, much of the technology to develop sustainably is there. Much local knowledge of sustainable practices is actually undervalued, as was clear from the example of the information provided by extension services in some countries of Africa.

We heard many emphasize the importance of holistic solutions – not focusing only on production technology improvements on the farm but also considering how to improve the whole agricultural value chain – including post-harvest technologies, marketing, as well as key infrastructure for market access like rural roads.

Also, technology uptake is closely intertwined with finance, capacity building and training.

Technology solutions in agriculture are usually localized to specific climatic, agro-ecological, social, economic and cultural contexts.  There is not 'one size fits all' technology solution for sustainable food security and agricultural development. At the same time, farmers that aim to serve commercial markets, including international markets, may need to conform to international norms and standards. We heard that the labelling landscape is a very crowded and confusing one, and developing country agricultural sectors may need help in navigating it and linking to global best practice.

We have also heard again echoes of some of the familiar debates. For example the importance of diversity and resilience in the agricultural technologies vs. monocultures which some believe are promoted by markets. The emphasis on nutrition security by

some vs. the concern that this might be taking attention away from basic question of access to food and sufficient calories.

In the afternoon, we heard interesting ideas on how to foster greater diffusion of already existing energy technologies that can simultaneous meet development and sustainability goals.

We heard that there is a range of technology needs and challenges. For some technologies, the challenge is to accelerate transfer of commercial and emerging technologies, often with a need to adapt to particular countries' conditions. In other instances, the challenge is development and diffusion of technologies "unaddressed" by global technology markets – for example, improved cookstoves. In still other cases, the challenge is one of effective deployment of existing technologies.

There are several aspects of effective technology deployment that need to be addressed in a systemic manner. There is a need to improve the technology development process, to find adequate and appropriate financing, and to develop markets for the products made with the technologies, including through enabling policies. The needs and gaps in these areas often differ across sectors, technologies, and countries.

Going forward, from our point of view, these indicate some of the areas where we clearly need further work and discussion, if we are to converge towards any new international collective action for clean technology collaboration and dissemination.

Ladies and gentlemen,

There is no doubt that our ultimate goal is to come up with workable proposals for updated international mechanisms to facilitate clean and environmentally sound technology development and transfer. And, it is also clear that existing technology facilitation mechanisms and programmes - while numerous - have not been entirely commensurate with the needs of developing countries and the planet.

But, as our experts have underlined, the issue at hand is complex and multi-dimensional.

We have to take a careful look at how the stage of development affects the options available to countries.

We also have to understand better the inter-linkages between what happens in develop countries and developing countries. Technology options and choices of developed countries have a crucial impact on technologies options of developing countries. Indeed, we gain nothing by presenting issues in different categories of countries as being antagonistic.

We have to look at North-South and South-South cooperation as complementary processes that can reinforce each other, rather than seeing them as mutually exclusive. I hope the second session of tomorrow's Workshop will help shed more light on that issue.

We are also reminded that we need a better focus on the institutional aspects of this problem at the international level. In Workshops 3 and 4, we will have to take a careful look at the institutional landscape.

The discussion of technology facilitation options should not be limited to existing approaches and initiatives.  A range of options needs to be considered.  In this context, the proposals made by the SG last fall should be looked at.

We made a good start today. I look forward to sustaining it.